



Pacific Electric ROW/West Santa Ana Branch Corridor
Alternatives Analysis
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1 (Revised)

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

SCAG Offices

818 West Seventh Street, 12th Floor

Policy Committee Room A

Los Angeles, CA 90017

Meeting Notes

Attendees	Organization
Philip Law	SCAG
Matt Gleason	SCAG
Ryan Kuo	SCAG
Nancy Michali	AECOM
Yara Jasso	AECOM
Katherine Padilla	Katherine Padilla & Associates
Ernesto Chaves	Metro
Ron Bates	City of South Gate
Deborah Chankin	City of Bellflower
Bill Pagett	City of Lakewood/ City of Maywood
Danny Wu	City of Anaheim
Jimmy Ewenike	LADOT
Mike Kodama	Orangeline Development Authority
Jerry Wood	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Maureen El Harake	Caltrans District 12
Kamran Dadbeh	City of Cypress
Kevin Wilson	City of Vernon
Nick Guilliams	City of Stanton
Christopher Cash	City of Paramount
G. Daniel Ojeda	City of Lynwood
Kirk Schneider	Caltrans District 7
Howard Huie	California Public Utilities Commission
Anton Gonabetin	California Public Utilities Commission
Karen Heit	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Kelly Hart	OCTA
Alvie Betancourt	City of South Gate
Shari Afshari	LA County Department of Public Works
Jessica Flores	City of Downey
Keith Jones	City of Garden Grove
Nick Duvally	LA County Fire Department

Project Overview and Presentation

- P. Law gave a presentation on project overview, background and current phase of the process. N. Michali followed with a background on the technical approach and analysis that the team will be conducting in addition to the public outreach. N. Michali stressed the importance of feedback from the TAC on all aspects of the project and ongoing participation. K. Padilla followed with an overview of the upcoming public workshops and format for the meetings. K. Padilla informed the group of the importance of the workshops in order to hear what's important to each community and to use this as the basis for the evaluation criteria.

Question and Answer Discussion

- Ron Bates (City of South Gate): Said his comment was coming from the perspective of the cities that want a viable option. He stated that there needs to be the same level of clarity on the color scheme of the project area map and the existing lines. He also remarked the more cities that are involved, the more the likelihood it becomes an approved project.
 - Question: When this study is finished, how close (more work) will the project be to being a bankable project? Will it be enough to begin to think about public/private partnerships?
 - N. Michali responded: At the end of this process there will be approximately a 5% level of information on engineering, cost, and impacts and this is not enough information for a FTA funding decision. Definitely not enough for public/private partnership decision. The next phase of the environmental process would be needed, which would take the project to a 40% level of information.
 - Question: How is the number of stops being determined? Will there be express or the ability to skip stops reflecting changes in ridership by location.
 - N. Michali responded: The operating plans will be based on a ridership analysis in order to understand where people are going.
 - Question: Happy to see all the alternatives on the boards, however wouldn't it be worth mentioning MAGLEV under HSR – so that there is no favoritism shown?
 - P. Law responded: At the moment we are looking at HSR as an operational category. Technology-based decisions will be looked at a later date.
- Susan Bok (LADOT) asked whether the Proposal (the study's intent) to connect all the way to Union Station under serious consideration? If so, then she suggested that potential routes should be shown on the project area map.
- Deborah Chankin (City of Bellflower): Stated that the way the material is currently presented, it looked as if MAGLEV has already been screened out of consideration.
 - P. Law stated that the team will edit the boards to show MAGLEV and Steel Wheel under HSR.
- Bill Pagett (City of Lakewood) commented that he was concerned with the reimbursement of federal funds for removal of rail tracks and bicycle paths along the PE ROW that may be required.

- N. Michali stated that she understood the concerns in regards to the treatments and stated that they will do everything to not touch existing improvements, for example, the bicycle path that was added in the city of Bellflower and will research requests to reimburse rail removal funding.
- Jimmy Ewenike (LADOT) expressed concern with not having any meetings in Los Angeles.
 - N. Michali stated that there have been 4 routes identified through Los Angeles and that the Mayor and City Council have shown support, but at the moment they do not feel the need to be involved.
- Mike Kodama (OLDA) stated that Los Angeles City Councilmember J. Huizar was looking close at this project and is a supporter. He also suggested that the Councilmember would be interested in commenting on connections/alignments to Union Station.
- Jerry Wood (GCCOG) commented that due to the LA-Anaheim HSR under construction, this may affect the recommended alternatives and how connections (approaches) to Union Station made be constrained. He suggested that it was important to communicate with the HSR authority so that the PE ROW Corridor Study isn't forced into a design that they don't want. Time is of the essence for communication.
- R. Bates (South Gate) stated that through good planning, maybe the actual northern connection doesn't have to be all the way to Union Station, particularly since there is some talk about the Orangeline connecting to Santa Clarita and Palmdale.
- Travel time should be seriously considered. Riders will be asking themselves "What's in it for me? How quickly can I get from Point A to Point B?" It will be interesting to find out in community meetings if this comes up.
- D. Chankin (Bellflower) commented that non-motorized travel exists and is planned along the corridor, so the team may want to show it on the boards. Asked whether it will be shown under the TSM alternative.
 - N. Michali agreed that it is important and at the moment we were just discussing motorized, but yes non-motorized improvements will be discussed.
 - J. Wood stated that however much detail the study puts into looking at parking at the stations, the team needs to triple the parking estimates
- A comment was made as to how HSR will serve the corridor communities as there would only be one or maybe two stops along the alignment.
 - P. Law stated that this is a broader issue that will be addressed by asking people where they want a connection, and where they want to go.
- D. Chankin (Bellflower) asked whether the flyer that was passed out was the final, and what languages it would be provided in for information about the workshops.
 - K. Padilla stated that the flyers are community-specific and will be in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. They will also list all six workshop meeting locations and times in both counties.
- R. Bates (South Gate) brought up the importance of transportation improvements being environmentally friendly, cost effective, energy efficient, and also showing the commercial benefit. He added that ridership will be an important factor in making decisions.

- Maureen El Harake (Caltrans District 12) commented on the importance of showing modal connectivity: addressing the connection to transit facilities via walking, bus, bike, etc. She added that through the public participation process people are educated about transportation issues.
- J. Wood (GCCOG) commented about connecting the corridor to the north and south should be rephrased to ask what connections should be made along whole corridor, not just north and south. He also suggested that parking, particularly its availability should be considered for riders.
- Danny Wu (City of Anaheim) pointed out that it may be helpful to first ask the public what they feel is their mobility problem, if any?
 - N. Michali agreed that it was a good point and may be good to first ask about community transportation issues and concerns.
- A comment was made that it may be helpful to outline the Corridor, what currently exists and what will happen in 10 years. Aside from showing the alternatives and having people choose the best option, show them the Corridor scenario in the years to come. Ask the question: What problem are you solving?
- M. Kodama (OLDA) suggested that it would be a good idea to show the resulting transit ridership in the presentation for comparison's sake of the alternatives.
 - N. Michali agreed that this would be a good idea to show the ridership, but that information is not yet known. It will be provided through technical analysis of potential ridership later in the study.
- Ernesto Chavez (Metro) asked whether the recently-revised FTA cost effectiveness thresholds would affect this study?
 - N. Michali stated that there is a new Federal rule and that cost-effectiveness is no longer the key decision-making factor for funding decisions for projects where funding is being appropriated over the next years.
- D. Chankin (Bellflower) expressed concern that, at least in Bellflower, the ROW has historically been seen as a problem from city limit to city limit, and that they have focused on how to turn the problem into an asset. She asked that we please consider identifying the ROW as a benefit that can be used to solve the identified problem.
 - P. Law stated that any/all questions posed by businesses and/or community members should be directed to him.
- Kamran Dadbeh (Cypress) stated that Cypress took four to five years to remove the railroad tracks from the Corridor right-of-way and to improve the impacted streets, and does not see a benefit to adding transit back to the Corridor. In terms of alternatives, the City's preference is: 1) No Build, or 2) an underground alternative, but even this build alternative would have negative impacts due to construction, etc.

Next Meeting

- P. Law stated that the next TAC meeting will be on Tuesday, July 13th and that the team will share the results of the community workshops, and will present a draft purpose and need statement, initial evaluation criteria, and Initial Set of Alternatives.

DISCUSSION BOARD NOTES

Design the system to operate underground – don't impact houses + streets

Look at:

1. Environmentally friendly
2. Energy –efficient
3. Recreational /comm./benefits
4. Cost effective/ridership

Important Issues Raised:

- Modal connectivity
 - Connect transportation facilities
- Public participation/involve communities
 - Educational opportunity
- Connectivity not to just North + South , but throughout corridor
- Pedestrian + vehicular safety concerns
- “Learn from other projects”
- Find out problem, rather than just ask for improvements /projects
- Bring Union Pacific on board!
- Grade – separated solutions
- Major arterials being crossed
- Visual impacts
- Identify areas where existing destinations are

Cost Effectiveness:

- The most cost effective project is more likely to find Public Private Partnership (funding opportunities) + federal funding
- Ensure livability, not just cost effectiveness is considered

Other Issues:

- Focus is to develop shovel ready projects
- Most Bellflower input was captured in key themes from Stakeholder Interviews' portion of the presentation.
- Regionally there's a need for a new transportation solution
- ROW has historically been a problem (leftover space with trash, criminal activity)
- Micro perspective: Bike trails useful in transforming ROW into an asset